

Mr Matt Turmaine MP
House of Commons
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Dear Mr Turmaine,

Reject any Budget which does not prioritise and bring forward the urgent rebuild of Watford General Hospital

One of the most significant promises you and your party made during your general election campaign was that our hospital would be rebuilt and upgraded. That action would be taken to ensure that it is safe, modern and worthy of the community it serves. Watford General Hospital's condition is no longer fit for purpose, with repair backlogs in the millions. Delaying its rebuild is a betrayal of the promises you and your party made at the General Election.

Watford's facilities have needed improvements for a very long time and despite that the staff continue to work excellently to provide excellent care – but the simple truth is that the building and the technology holds the services back.

Recent comments made by Professor Steve Turner, President of the Royal College of Paediatric and Child Health, have further highlighted the need for further funding into our hospital. He has condemned failings of our healthcare system as treating children as “second class citizens” and failing them “across the board”. Watford is a busy district general hospital, providing a vital part of children's healthcare. More support is needed for these most vulnerable members of our society; ensuring the best start in life is imperative in ensuring a healthy and thriving population of the future.

Since being elected, you have shown loyalty to this Labour Government as it cancelled winter fuel payments for many pensioners, despite ongoing high fuel costs, increased the cost of bus travel, sought to push through cuts to disability support, and supported last year's budget that imposed higher national insurance costs - which disproportionately affected small businesses, social care providers and the retail sector. These are decisions, much like the lack of funding for the hospital, that punish our lowest paid workers and many vulnerable people in Watford.

Where is your loyalty to Watford? Where is the pressure placed on this Government for our community? If you vote through a Budget which fails to bring forward the immediate rebuild of our hospital, you will have broken not only the promise you made during the election, but also the trust of tens of thousands of people in Watford.

I urge you to **reject any Budget that does not include explicit, fully funded, urgent plans to rebuild Watford General Hospital.**

Watford staff and patients deserve better. We deserve a hospital we can rely on, a clear commitment from our MP who will fight for us, and not simply one who votes loyally for a Government that puts burdens on our poorest and neglects our local health services.

Yours sincerely,
Cllr Ian Stotesbury